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From preschool to school education: the structure of the emotive environment

Olga V. Lomtadze^a, Anna S. Alekseeva^{*a}, Ludmila V. Zagumennova^b

^a*Ural Federal University, Mira st 19, Ekaterinburg, 620002, Russia*

^b*Luceum № 110, Bazhova st 124, Ekaterinburg, 620075, Russia*

Abstract

Situations of an emotional pressure on children are investigated in the conditions of transition from preschool to school education. The article defines the structure of the emotive environment of the first grader and shows the differences from the standard model of child's transition from preschool to school education. During this transition the contribution of some components from the group of other emotive situations proves to be equal or even bigger than that of the traditionally important educational and game motivations.

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* Alekseeva A.S. Tel.: +7-902-26-55595.

E-mail address: nurochka_k@mail.ru

1. Introduction

Possibilities of a human's personal development greatly increase in the situation of transition to post-industrial informational society. On the other hand, conditions of informational overload and redundancy dramatically impact the emotional and motivational components of a child's forming identity. The process is particularly difficult during transition from one social institution to another [1]. So, scientists of all branches concerned with age periodization such as teachers [2, 3], psychologists [4], psychophysicologists and physiologists [5], neuropsychologists [6], note the difficulties in adaptation to school conditions. A proper positive emotional background directly depending on the emotive factors of the environment is necessary for further development and self-development of a child's identity.

We've conducted our research primarily to examine the leading emotive factors that influence children during child adaptation to school and help develop their motivation for basic activities in school.

2. Method

The projective psychological method "I am happy" [7] was used to identify emotive factors that exert influence on children, and to identify their leading motives. Children at the age of 6.5 - 7.5 years (12 boys and 18 girls) were offered to draw themselves in situations when, in their opinion, they had feelings of happiness "I am happy" or unhappiness "I am unhappy". The emotive factors were divided into three groups: educational, game and others. The structure of each group of factors was defined. Advantages of this projective psychologic method consist in children's high emotional involvement into the drawing of emotionally significant situations. Drawings and their comments were processed to identify emotive factors. The determination of statistically reliable differences was carried out by means of Fischer's angular transformation ($\phi^* > \phi^{*cr.}$, $p < 0,05$), Pearson's criterion ($\chi^2 > \chi^2_{cr.}$, $p < 0,05$).

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Characteristics of the main groups of emotive factors

According to the data obtained, on the whole in the sample of first graders, the main groups of emotive factors were distributed as follows (% , the differences are significant) in Table 1: education/games/others – 15/23/62. According to the distribution obtained, game situations make a larger emotive contribution than educational situations, at the same time the major role belongs to "other" emotive types of activity.

Table 1. The main groups of emotive factors

Components	On the whole, frequency (%)	I am happy, frequency (%)	I am unhappy, frequency (%)
Education	15	10	20
Games	23	20	25
Others	62	70	55

Similar regularity is observed in the structure of the positive emotional reinforcement "I am happy" (% , the differences are significant): educational/games/others – 10/20/70. In a situation of negative emotional

reinforcement "I am unhappy" the ratio of the groups was (%), the differences are significant in comparison with other activities): education/games/others – 20/25/55.

With the stable role of game situations in providing both positive and negative emotions, that of educational activity increases in negatively painted situations, reducing the emotive importance of other situations. Increase in the negative importance of educational activity is, most likely, due to difficulties of adaptation to studying at school and with transition problems. It is possible to say that the understanding of the educational activity at this age has more to do with the fear of failures rather than with the joy of achievements. Situations dealing with communication problems in the school collective were also revealed in the group of the emotive negative factors associated with educational activity which shows us that a child has not only intellectual but also social issues.

3.2. Characteristics of group of others emotive factors

As the group of other emotive situations makes the greatest contribution to the first graders' emotional state, it seems expedient to consider the structure of this group by describing its components. As a result of the statistical analysis, the following emotive components were revealed: home/family, nature/a walk, communication/friends, health/illness, loss/acquisition (subject environment) (Table 2).

Table 2. The structure of "others" group, including its main components

Components	In general, Frequency (%)	I am happy, Frequency (%)	I am unhappy, Frequency (%)
Home/family	15	20	12
Nature/walk	30	54	12
Communication/friends	9	6	6
Health/illness	16		35
Loss/acquisition	30	20	35

In general, the ratio of the components is as follows (%), the differences are significant): nature/a walk//the subject environment//home / family//health / illness//communication / friends – 30//30//15//16//9. In a condition of a positive emotional reinforcement, it is 54//20//20//–//6. In a condition of a negative emotional reinforcement, it is 12//35//12//35//6. According to the results obtained, open air walks produce the greatest positive influence on a child's emotional state. The situations the child finds to be the most difficult are those involving health impairments and problems in the subject environment that stem from the loss, shortage or violation in the work of necessary objects of activity. The low indicators for emotive influence of the communication/friends component are most likely related to the age and social conditions of child development in the modern world.

4. Conclusion

In modern information society new situations of development form another ratio of emotive factors which is different from the classical one during a child's transition from preschool to school education. During this transition the contribution of some components from the group of other emotive situations proves to be equal or even bigger than that of the traditionally important educational and game motivations.

Taking into account the identified structure of emotive factors in the first grader's environment, it is possible to make the following recommendations: to expand forms of training and off-hour work with the maximum use of walks, lessons and excursions in the open air. Parents should take their children out for daily walks in order to

remove stress from adaptation to school. For the purpose of reducing negative emotive influence it is necessary to promote children's physical health, to create the object environment that corresponds to children's age and meets their needs, to develop personal qualities for self-organization and positive self-perception in children.

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